

A Healthy Baby Begins with You

Contributing Factors

An infant's survival and long-term health is influenced by many factors, including the mother's age, health status and behavior during and after pregnancy.

Health researchers have identified the following nine risk factors that contribute to infant mortality:

- Late Prenatal Care
- Smoking
- Substance Abuse
- Poor Nutrition
- Obesity
- High Stress
- Domestic Violence
- Low Maternal Weight Gain
- Preterm Labor

African American Infant Mortality

Celebrating a baby's birth should be a joyous and momentous time for a family. Unfortunately, the celebration ends too soon when a baby doesn't live to see his first birthday. Infant mortality rates among African Americans are more than double that of the United States as a whole. That's more than 7,500 infant deaths per year.

A Healthy Baby Begins with You!

The Office of Minority Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services wants you to know that infant mortality is preventable.

Step up and help end infant mortality!

Call **1.800.444.6472**

www.omhrc.gov





Tips for a Healthy Start for Mothers and Babies

Being healthy before, during and after pregnancy is important for the mother and her baby and starts by making a commitment to prenatal care.

Taking Care of Yourself Before Pregnancy

- Get a check-up for high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, seizures and thyroid disease.
- Get tested for HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Take a vitamin with folic acid every day.

During Pregnancy

- Make yourself a priority. Find a support group.
- Get information about healthy pregnancy from your health care provider.
- Make and keep your prenatal care appointments. Ask about complications or risks you may have.
- Take your prenatal vitamins.

After Pregnancy

- Get a six-week check-up after having your baby.
- Wait at least six weeks before having sex.
- Breastfeed your baby. You'll lose weight, and your baby will be the happiest camper on the block.
- Take medications as directed by your physician.

Always

- Eat healthy, with plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Be active! Exercise at least 30 minutes a day.
- Keep stress under control, do pleasant things that will keep you in good spirits.
- Don't smoke, drink or use drugs. They will harm you and your baby.

Taking Care of Your Baby

- Put your baby to sleep on his back EVERY TIME to prevent sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- The safest place for your baby to sleep is in a crib. To reduce the risk for SIDS, do not allow your baby to sleep on a couch, sofa, bed, or pillow.
- Avoid using soft objects, stuffed toys, loose bedding and blankets in the crib.
- Keep your baby's shots current by keeping your well-baby appointments.
- The best thing you can give your baby is breast milk. Breast is Best!
- Do not expose your baby to second hand smoke.